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OF
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ON
SPINNING EYE AND MOUTH
CHARACTER CANDY DISPENSER

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SPINNING EYE AND MOUTH CHARACTER CANDY DISPENSER

BACKGROUND

There may be a demand for dispensers which serve as containers for small confections, and the like, that include features that may attract a purchaser. Such dispensers enable purchasers, such as children, to carry confections, including candy, chewing gum, and the like, under relatively sanitary conditions and to dispense such confections as desired without the danger of spilling and/or contaminating the entire quantity of confections.

Confection dispensers are generally well known in the art and come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes. A relatively high percentage of candy purchases may be made by, or at the insistence of, children. However, the typical child may have little, if any, brand loyalty, and thus candy manufacturers may have long relied on clever packaging in order to attract the purchaser's attention. One marketing approach may be to put the candy in an attractive candy dispenser designed to appeal to children and/or adults. For example, many members of the public can recall the very popular Pez® candy dispensers. Other candy packages may rely on the use of licensed cartoon characters, action figures, or even the name of a popular sports personality. Thus, it may be a commonly held belief that a candy container or dispenser that incorporates one or more novel or unique features is very likely to significantly increase the sales of that candy product. Therefore, there is a continuing need for novel candy containers and dispensers.

SUMMARY

Provided is a dispensing system, including a container configured with one or more apertures, and configured to house items, a faceplate configured with one or more dispensing apertures, rotationally coupled to the container, such that the items may be dispensed from the container, and one or more novelties coupled to the container, configured to move when the faceplate rotates with respect to the container.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1 is a perspective view of an exemplary embodiment according to the present invention.

Figure 2 is an exploded view of the exemplary embodiment of Figure 1.

Figure 3 is a further exploded view of the exemplary embodiment of Figure 1.

Figures 4a-c are top views of an exemplary embodiments showing various novelties.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The detailed description set forth below in connection with the appended drawings is intended as a description of exemplary embodiments and is not intended to represent the only forms in which the embodiments may be constructed and/or utilized. The description also sets forth the functions and the sequence of steps for constructing and operating the invention in connection with the illustrated embodiments. However, it is to be understood that the same or equivalent functions and sequences may be accomplished by different embodiments that are also intended to be encompassed within

the spirit and scope of the invention.

A perspective view of an item dispensing system according to one embodiment of the present invention is shown in Figure 1, generally at **10**. System **10** typically includes a container **12** coupled to a faceplate **50** and including novelty portions **60** that may be configured to rotationally couple to container **12** or to faceplate **50**. Container **12** is made up of a top housing **20** and a bottom housing **40** that are configured to couple to each other to form an enclosure therein. When faceplate **50** is rotated with respect to container **12**, novelty portions **60** may be configured to rotate also. Faceplate **50** typically includes a dispensing aperture **54** that is configured to allow items to pass there through. System **10** is typically configured to hold confectionaries, such as candy or other items, and to selectively dispense those items, as desired.

Figures 2 and 3 are exploded views of item dispensing system **10** from Figure 1. Novelty portions **60** may be configured to include a gearing coupling portion **62** that extends through novelty apertures **52** in faceplate **50**. Faceplate **50** may be also configured with a dispensing aperture **54** that, when aligned with dispensing orifices **24** in top housing **20**, will allow items such as candy to pass from the interior of container **12** through dispensing orifice **24** and dispensing aperture **54** to the exterior of the system. Faceplate **50** also typically includes a gearing coupling aperture **56** configured to allow rotational gearing **74** to couple to the faceplate to couple the two.

Gearing coupling portion **62** of rotating novelty portion **60** is configured to extend through novelty aperture **52** of faceplate **50** and coupled to novelty gearing **70**. Novelty gearing **70** is configured to rotationally couple to top housing **20** such that

when faceplate **50** is rotated with respect to container **12** or top housing **20**, novelty portions **60** may also rotate.

Top housing **20** typically includes integrated gearing **22** that is configured to couple to rotational gearing **74** and novelty gearing **70**, such that when faceplate **50** is rotated with respect to container **12** or top housing **20**, novelty portions **60** will rotate. With rotational gearing **74** rotationally coupled to one of novelty portions **60**, this configuration will allow novelty portions **60** to rotate in opposite directions, as desired.

Top housing **20** also typically includes one or more dispensing apertures **24** that when aligned with dispensing aperture **54** of faceplate **50** will allow items such as candy to pass from the interior of container **12** to the exterior of the system.

Therefore, when a user, such as a child, desires to dispense candy from the system, the user rotates the faceplate to align the apertures to allow candy to pass from the interior to the exterior of the system. When the user rotates the faceplate to align the apertures, the novelty portions also rotate, enhancing the play value and adding enjoyment for everyone.

Bottom housing **40** typically includes a top housing coupling structure **42** that is configured to couple to top housing **20** at a bottom housing coupling structure. It will be appreciated, however, that although an interference fit configuration is shown, other coupling structures may be utilized, as desired. It will be appreciated that although top housing **20** is shown with sides, bottom housing **40** may also include a vertical cylindrical portion configuration, as desired.

Bottom housing **40** also typically includes a hinged portion **44** that will

selectively couple to top housing **20** such that it may be opened and more items, such as candy, may be easily placed within container **12**. Although hinged portion **44** and top housing **20** are configured to couple via a friction or interference fit, other selectively coupling structures may be utilized, as desired.

5 With this configuration a user, such as a child, may easily open the bottom and easily insert more candy, then dispense the candy in a fun and entertaining way by rotating the faceplate and thereby causing the novelty portions to rotate also.

Faceplate **50** typically rotationally couples to top housing **20** via an overlapped fit, however, other rotationally coupling configurations may be utilized, as desired. All
10 of the parts of system **10** are typically made from a plastic material, however other materials, such as rubber and other polymers, among others, may be utilized, as desired.

Figure 3 shows another exploded view of the exemplary embodiment in Figure 1, showing novelty portions **60**, which typically have a gearing coupling portion **62** and
15 a visual portion **61**. Gearing coupling portion **62** is typically configured to extend through an aperture of gearing to expand on the other side to couple them together. However, other coupling structures and configurations may be utilized, as desired. Similarly, rotational gearing **74** couples to faceplate **50** in a similar way, but other rotationally coupling configurations may be utilized, as desired. Also shown is the
20 underside of faceplate **50**, showing one exemplary configuration for rotational gearing **74** and gearing **70**. Gearing coupling portion **62** of novelty portion **60** is configured to couple to novelty gearing **70**. Novelty gearing **70** is configured to rotationally couple to

the top housing such that when faceplate **50** is rotated with respect to container **12** or top housing **20**, novelty portions **60** rotate also.

Gearing coupling portion **62** is typically formed along with visual portion **61** in one piece, however, they may be configured to be coupled together in many ways, as
5 desired.

Although visual portion **61** is shown as eyes, or the like, it will be appreciated that many other types of novelty portions may be utilized to add to the play value and entertainment of the system, as desired. Faceplate **50** is typically in the form of a face of a caricature, but it will be appreciated that many other configurations may be utilized
10 to add entertainment value to the system, as desired. Integrated gearing **22** may be configured such that on the exterior of the container **12**, such that the operation of the gearing will not be impeded or interfered with by the items to be dispensed by the system.

Figures 4a-c show the system in various rotational positions. Because faceplate
15 **50** includes a dispensing aperture that may resemble the mouth of the caricature, top housing **20** may also include graphics **80**, **82**, and **84** between the dispensing orifices that may be visible when the dispensing aperture is aligned with them. This may make it appear as if the caricature's mouth is closed, open, having a full set of teeth, missing teeth, or many other configurations, as desired, to enhance play value and enjoyment of
20 the system.

In closing, it is to be understood that the exemplary embodiments described herein are illustrative of the principles of the present invention. Other modifications

that may be employed are within the scope of the invention. Thus, by way of example, but not of limitation, alternative configurations may be utilized in accordance with the teachings herein. Accordingly, the drawings and description are illustrative and not meant to be a limitation thereof.